

Message Text

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3997

S E C R E T GENEVA 9663

NODIS CHEROKEE

TO THE SECRETARY FROM REINHARDT

DEPT PASS LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: RICHARD'S DEC 3 MEETING WITH THE
OBSERVERS

1. IF I NEEDED ANOTHER REMINDER OF THE DIFFICULTY OF
SELLING A COUNCIL OF STATE, THE RESULTS OF RICHARD'S
MEETING WITH THE OBSERVERS CONFIRMED BY UNDERSTANDING.
2. THE OBSERVERS CALLED ON RICHARD FOR A BRIEFING ON
THE DISCUSSIONS HE HAD CONDUCTED WITH THE DELEGATIONS
CONCERNING THE FORMATION OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. THE
OBSERVERS TOLD RICHARD THAT IT WAS THEIR OBJECTIVE TO SEEK
AN IMMEDIATE TRANSFER OF POWER. ON PROBING THEM FURTHER,
THEY ADMITTED THAT POWER COULD BE TRANSFERRED DURING THE
INTERIM GOVERNMENT BUT THE ONLY WAY TO MAKE THE TRANSFER
IRREVERSIBLE WOULD BE TO INSURE THAT POWER IS GIVEN AT
THE BEGINNING AND NOT THE END OF THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION.
3. THE OBSERVERS ARGUED FROM THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S
POSITION AND SAID THAT THE PRINCIPLE OF POWER SHARING
WAS ADMITTED IN THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S PAPER (GENEVA 9620).
THE FACT THAT EUROPEANS WOULD HOLD 5 OUT OF 25 MINISTRIES
WAS PROOF OF THE NATIONALIST WILLINGNESS TO LET

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EUROPEANS PARTICIPATE ON A MORE THAN REASONABLE BASIS

RICHARD ASKED IF BRITAIN COULD POSSIBLY HOLD THE BALANCE DURING TRANSITION AND THEREBY GUARANTEE THE IRREVERSIBILITY OF THE PROCESS. THE OBSERVERS REPLIED THAT THEY SAW A NEED FOR BRITAIN TO PLAY A BALANCING ROLE BUT THAT WHITE RHODESIANS WOULD HAVE TO LOOK FOR OTHER FORMS OF ASSURANCE THAN THOSE CONTAINED IN THE COUNCIL OF STATE. THE NATIONALISTS WERE PREPARED TO REASSURE EUROPEANS IN A NUMBER OF WAYS AND HAD ONLY BEGUN TO HINT AT THEM IN THE POSITIONS THEY HAD ADVANCED DURING THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT DEBATE. CATTO

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